

## “OVER THERE”

come to me and say to me, ‘Will you let this battalion go in first? We think we can go through them.’ I hear that in every battalion.

“I know how heavy your packs are. I made them as heavy as they are, and when you get up there in the mountains you are going to be damned glad that you have that extra blanket. You have one more blanket with you than any other regiment in the American army in France. You may have to ditch one of them, but we will keep them while we can.

“I have been yelling at you and drilling you, but I have every individual’s interest at heart. I want to make you equal to the Boche and I want you to meet him on equal or better ground. There is not a man of you who is not a better man physically than when you came into the army. You might think that you are young, and your wives and sweethearts and mothers might think that you are too young to be killed. It is right for them to think that. But you are not going with the idea of getting killed, and if you hang together you are going to put this over. I went to Cuba when I was nineteen years old. When I started my father was catching a train and in a hurry, and didn’t seem to feel very bad over my going. I believe he was glad of it and I thought I saw a twinkle in his eye—proud that I was going—and I was proud of it myself. He said to me: ‘It takes a wagon load of bullets to kill one man, sickness is what kills an army, and I know if you get into a tight place you will stick it out.’

“I wanted to let you know why you have been working like you have. If you take 250 men out and say: ‘Bill, you and George come over here, we are going to throw a few hand grenades this morning,’ and Bill says, ‘Aw hell, we did that yesterday,’ you would never get anywhere. You can’t build an army that way. I am proud of every one of you. You have been made soldiers quicker than any men ever have in the history